as though, like his predecessor MacDonald, he would not so much resign the Premiership as let it fall listlessly from his hands. The difficulties, which Dr. Blunt had unwittingly brought to a head, had the immediate effect of reviving him. Like a soldier, after tedious months of unfamiliar ease in the South of France, called into action again, his lassitude vanished. Here was something he understood, something he could handle as no one else could. It was Dr. Blunt who was going to require recuperation, not he. Long interviews with the King, late appearances in the House of Commons with members all impatiently awaiting what he had to say, were invigorating rather than exhausting; speeches based on 'scrappy notes', and apologised for in advance, but perfectly fulfilling their function, took less out of him than answering supplementary questions on the progress of rearmament. No sealed lips this time—perfect frankness.

The King, Mr. Baldwin explained, had expressed his intention of marrying Mrs. Simpson, and Mr. Baldwin had told him in the friendliest manner that he did not think such a marriage would meet with the approval of his subjects, since it would involve the lady becoming Queen. No constitutional issue had arisen, nor was any pressure being brought to bear on the King, either to make up his mind at once, or to renounce Mrs. Simpson. When Mr. Churchill asked, not unreasonably, for an 'assurance that no irrevocable step would be taken before a formal statement had been made to Parliament,' Mr. Baldwin was non-committal; the next time Mr. Churchill asked for such an assur-

ance, he was irritable, as though to complain that surely he had enough to bear without that being brought up again; and the third time it was only necessary for him to look pained for indignant voices to be raised calling on Mr. Churchill to resume his seat, which he did in some confusion. Thus silencing Mr. Churchill was perhaps the most difficult part of Mr. Baldwin's task. The King was constitutionally silent; Parliament's silence he was skilled in procuring, and Mrs. Simpson soon withdrew to Cannes, where she issued a statement to the effect that she was willing, 'if such action would solve the problem, to withdraw